

a hosel having a base portion extending generally upwardly from said top surface of said putter head and adjacent to said toe portion, a first intermediate portion extending forwardly from the base portion beyond the face of the putter head, a second intermediate portion laterally extending from said first intermediate portion toward said heel portion of the putter head and in parallel with the face of the putter head, and a shaft socket; and

a shaft attached to and extending generally upwardly from the shaft socket of the hosel.

46. (New) The hosel of claim 45 wherein said second intermediate portion extends generally along the length of the putter head from the toe portion to the heel portion and protrudes beyond the face of the putter head, creating a perceived line of intersection along the top of the golf ball.

REMARKS

We are in receipt of the Office Action dated June 29, 2004, and the accompanying amendments and following remarks are made in light thereof.

All claims have been rewritten to define the invention patentably over the prior art. Thus, claims 18-27 have been cancelled and replaced with new claims 28-46. Due to the cancellation of these claims, the rejections are now rendered moot. New Claims 28-46 are believed to be allowable over Meyer 5,544,883; Meyer 5,544,883 in view of Miller 5,344,149; and Meyer 5,544,883 in view of Montgomery 5,167,414.

Claims rejected under 35 USC 102

Claims 18, 21, 22, 24-27 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Meyer 5,544,883. To overcome the rejections, these claims are being canceled herein and replaced by a new set of claims that are not anticipated by Meyer.

Meyer provides a face-balanced putter with an offset hosel 12 that is connected to the heel end 18 of the putter head 11 and has a forwardly extending portion 39 so that the putter shaft 13 and hosel 12 do not obstruct the top line 21 view

behind the golf ball at address. Meyer's hosel also has a laterally extending portion 40 that extends from the forwardly extending portion 39 toward the toe end 19 in a direction generally parallel with the face 16. The laterally extending portion 40 extends only a short distance toward the toe end, stopping well before the center of the putter head and thus the center of the golf ball at address. Meyer's invention provides for a face-balanced putter, one where the axis of the shaft intersects the center of gravity CG of the putter head or intersects a line which extends through the center of gravity perpendicular to the face. Therefore, the laterally extending portion cannot extend beyond the half way point along the length of the putter head and still provide a face-balanced putter. Additionally, if the laterally extending portion extended along the length of the putter head, the shaft-attaching portion would extend generally upwardly from the toe portion and the shaft would block some or all of the top line 21 behind the ball at address.

The present invention provides a hosel 116 with a forwardly extending portion 122 and a laterally extending portion 124 as does Meyer. The present invention, however, provides an offset hosel that is connected to the toe portion 104 of the putter head 100 rather than the heel portion 106 as is defined and claimed in Meyer. Also, unlike Meyer, the laterally extending portion (second intermediate portion 124) of the present invention extends in the direction toward the heel portion and generally extends along the length of the putter head so that the laterally extending portion 124 begins along the toe portion and ends along the heel portion. This laterally extending portion (second intermediate portion), which is forwardly projected beyond the face 110 of the putter head, overlaps the entire length of the golf ball (in parallel direction with face) for a certain distance from the point of contact with the putter head face toward the center of the golf ball (perpendicular with face). This overlap of the golf ball creates a perceived line of intersection along the top of the golf ball and in parallel with the plane of the face, which acts as a visual reference when aligning the putter face with the intended path of the ball. As shown in Figure 2, Meyer provides a hosel that overhangs a small portion of a golf ball in the address position. The overhang

does not, however, extend along the entire golf ball length, which runs parallel with the face, nor does it extend from the contact point between the ball and the putter face at address position to some distance beyond the putter face and create a perceived line of intersection along the top of the golf ball and in parallel with the plane of the face. The placement and make up of the hosel of the present invention is intended to create the above-identified perceived line of intersection along the top of the golf ball. The hosel provided by Meyer cannot achieve such a perceived line of intersection and does not set out to do so. Meyer merely provides a hosel and shaft that does not obstruct the top line, which is the intersection between the face and top surface of the putter head, and the single point of contact between the face and the golf ball when a golfer is addressing the ball. Such a single point of contact provides a limited visual guide and makes it difficult for the golfer to square the putter face with the ball and its intended path. The perceived line of intersection along the top of the golf ball of the present invention provides an improved visual guide over a single point of intersection.

For the above-identified reasons, the present invention is not anticipated by Meyer. The new claims 28-46 define the invention more distinctly so as to overcome the rejections under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Meyer.

Obviousness Rejections under 35 USC 103

Claims 19 and 20 stand rejected under 35 USC 103 as being unpatentable over Meyer 5,544,883 in view of Miller 5,344,149. Claim 23 is rejected under 35 USC 103 as being unpatentable over Meyer 5,544,883 in view of Montgomery 5,167,414. Due to the cancellation of these claims, these rejections are now rendered moot. New Claims 28-46 have been added and are believed to be allowable. Since the new claims are not anticipated by Meyer, they overcome the 35 USC 103 rejections as being unpatentable over Meyer in view of Miller and over Meyer in view of Montgomery.

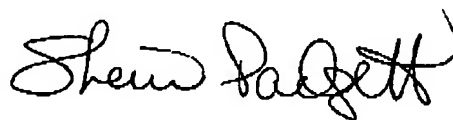
Objections

Claims 19-24 are objected to for being dependent upon a previously canceled claim. Due to cancellation of these claims, this rejection is now rendered moot. New claims have been added and are believed to be allowable.

Conclusion

For all of the above reasons, applicant submits that the claims are now in proper form and define patentably over the prior art. Therefore, applicant respectfully submits that this application is now in condition for allowance, and an early Office Action in this regard is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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